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April 16, 2007

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *Jonathan E. Fielding*
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **SYPHILIS AND OTHER STD CONTROL EFFORTS**

On June 13, 2006, the Board approved a motion by Supervisors Yaroslavsky and Molina to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy directed at prevention and intervention of syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

In late June, I provided you with a draft report for consideration in the budget deliberations. During July and August 2006, we refined the plan in consultation with the Board offices. On September 20, 2006, I provided the Board offices with the final report with a comprehensive strategy, media campaign, budget and timeline. On September 26, 2006, as part of the supplemental budget, the Board approved funding of \$700,000 provided by Supervisor Yaroslavsky's funds for this fiscal year. Combined with the \$500,000 in one-time savings identified by the Department, we had enough funding to begin implementation of the project. Status reports were provided to the board on November 20, 2006, February 5, 2007, and February 27, 2007.

This is to provide you with a status report with particular attention to the social marketing component.

SOCIAL MARKETING PLAN

On March 13, 2007, the Board approved an agreement with Frazer Communications to implement the social marketing component of this plan.

Background and Accomplishments To Date

1. Community Advisory Groups (CAGs):

MSM (Men who have Sex with Men) CAG: The most recent meeting of the MSM CAG was held on February 28, 2007, and was attended by representatives of four community agencies, Office of AIDS Programs and Policy (OAPP), and the STD Program. Principal topics of discussion were the MSM focus group recruiting questionnaire (screener) and the list of questions to be asked at the focus groups (discussion guide). CAG members were asked to review the revised focus group discussion guides for a final time before the focus groups were held. The next CAG meeting will be held after the MSM focus groups are completed and the results are analyzed. Materials for CAG members can also be found on a dedicated page of the STD Program website, <http://www.lapublichealth.org/std/msm~cag.htm>.

Women of Color CAG: The most recent meeting of the Women of Color CAG was held on February 27, 2007, and was attended by representatives of six community agencies, and the STD Program. The principal topics of discussion were the Women of Color focus group participant recruiting questionnaire and the discussion guides. The same discussion guide is being used for African-American and Latina focus groups to allow for replication of results and to detect differences and commonalities. Care was taken to include appropriate questions in the discussion guides for both African-American and Latina women that could provide actionable results. Groups for African-American and Latina women are being conducted separately. Separate Latina focus groups are being held in English and Spanish. The discussion guide for Spanish dominant Latina groups was translated into Spanish and those groups will be moderated by a native Spanish speaker.

The CAG also discussed possible venues for campaign-linked outreach and testing activities. CAG members were asked to review the revised focus group discussion guides a final time before the focus groups for Women of Color were held. The next CAG meeting will be held after the Women of Color focus groups are completed and the results have been analyzed. Materials for CAG members can also be found on a dedicated page of the STD Program's website, <http://www.lapublichealth.org/std/woc~cag.htm>.

An effort is underway to augment the CAG with more Latina participants. Additional members from Latino organizations have been contacted to participate in the next CAG.

2. Formative Research (i.e., Focus Groups):

The focus groups were held between March 28, and April 11, 2007. The results will be summarized for use by May 1, 2007.

3. Process Measures and Monitoring:

One process measure has been developed and implemented to monitor the impact of the campaign. The number of lab specimens processed by the Department's Public Health Lab for syphilis, chlamydia and gonorrhea screening will be tracked. An increase will indicate more MSM and women of color being screened.

4. Evaluation:

Drafts of the Baseline (pre-campaign) survey questionnaires for the targets of the campaign, MSM, Latinas and African American women between 18-25 have been created and are under review at the STD Program and Fraser Communications. These draft survey instruments are being reviewed by Fraser and are to be finalized with CAG input by early April. Baseline measures for this assessment will be collected in April 2007, prior to the launch of the campaign.

5. Campaign Development, Implementation and Campaign-Linked Outreach:

These activities will occur over the remainder of the funding period after formative research and Baseline surveys are conducted.

CASE FINDING AND TREATMENT

Hiring continues for the following 11 positions:

- **1 Public Health Investigator Manager** (began work on 2/1/07)
- **5 Public Health Investigators** (5 selected, 1 declined position and interviews pending; 4 staff began work on 3/6/07, 3/27/07, 3/28/07 and 4/2/07)
- **3 Community Services Counselors/Community Workers** (2 Community Workers were selected and offered the position and both candidates accepted. LiveScan was completed for one staff person on 4/10/07 and the second one to be completed on 4/18/07. Plans to complete interviews for the Community Services Counselor by 5/10/07)
- **1 Research Analyst III, Internet Interventions** (began work on 2/27/07)
- **1 Student Professional Worker** (interview date to follow)

Community PHIS:

As previously reported, two agencies with a minimum of 100 early syphilis cases per year were selected [LA Gay and Lesbian Center (LAGLC) and AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF)].

The STD Program continues to work with AHF and LAGLC to refine the scope of work for the contract amendment and plans to have documents ready for contracts and grants by April 30, 2007. OAPP will begin contract augmentations for several HIV Counseling and Testing contractors to enhance syphilis screening efforts. OAPP and STDP have developed a list of OAPP funded CBOs that would benefit from Phlebotomy Technician I training. The STD Program continues to work on contract language that will increase the number of CBOs that enroll staff who have successfully completed phlebotomy technician training and to increase the number of OAPP funded CBOs that have at least one certified phlebotomy technician on staff.

I will provide you with another report in 30 days. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

JEF:js
PH:606:015-9

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors